



MEDIA RELEASE

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Hepatitis C Testing Day Scheduled for June 21 at Health Department

(Mason City) – The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health is hosting a Hepatitis C Testing Day for baby boomers (those born from 1945-1965). Testing will be held at the Health Department from 8AM-3PM. Appointments are required.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 3 out of 4 people with hepatitis C were born from 1945-1965 (baby boomers). The reason behind this is unknown, however most baby boomers are believed to have become infected in the 1960s-1980s when transmission of hepatitis C was highest.

Hepatitis C is an infection caused by a virus that attacks the liver and leads to liver damage, cirrhosis, and even liver cancer. Most people with hepatitis C do not know they are infected. Since many people can live with hepatitis C for decades without symptoms or feeling sick, testing is critical so those who are infected can get treated and cured.

Hepatitis C is primarily spread through contact with blood from an infected person. Baby boomers could have gotten infected from medical equipment, or procedures before universal precautions and infection control procedures were adopted. Others could have gotten infected from contaminated blood and blood products before widespread screening virtually eliminated the virus from the blood supply by 1992. Sharing needles or equipment used to prepare or inject drugs, even if only once in the past, could spread hepatitis C. Still, many people do not know how or when they were infected.

“Hepatitis C can be treated and cured,” said Sam Smith, Disease Prevention Specialist at the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health. “If left undetected or untreated, the damage to the liver can be fatal. We are really hoping the baby boomers in our county will take advantage of this testing opportunity.”

Hepatitis C testing at the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health is available FREE to anyone between the ages of 1945 to 1965.

For more information about Hepatitis C testing or to schedule an appointment, contact Sam at 641-421-9309, or visit our website at www.cghealth.com.

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